

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-02 A-01 SCA-01 PER-05 L-03 OC-06

CCO-00 SS-15 NSC-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DRC-01 /081 W

----- 120917

R 020745Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL Leningrad

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 67

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE Leningrad 650

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEC, ATRN, ACOM, EUR

SUBJECT: CUSTOMS INSPECTION OF OFFICIAL SHIPMENTS

REF: STATE 167808

1. IN MEETING WITH Leningrad CUSTOMS CHIEF SEPTEMBER 27, SOVIETS ASSERTED RIGHT TO INSPECT ANY SHIPMENT, OFFICIAL OR PERSONAL, ARRIVING IN THE SOVIET UNION FOR CONGEN Leningrad. IN THIS REGARD, SOVIETS ASKED THAT CONGEN SUBMIT LIST OF CONTENTS FOR INCOMING SHIPMENTS. CONGEN OFFICERS POINTED OUT THAT CUSTOMS INSPECTION AND SUBMISSION OF PACKING LIST BOTH QUESTIONS INVOLVING DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES, PRIVILEGES CONFERRED BY US SOVIET CONSULAR CONVENTION, AND RECIPROCITY. SOVIETS REPLIED THAT CUSTOMS REGULATIONS WERE APPLIED UNIFORMLY TO ALL CONSULATES, WITHOUT REGARD RECIPROCITY.

2. FOLLOWING DAY, SOVIETS REQUESTED THAT TWO SAFES SHIPPED FROM FRANKFURT BE OPENED AT CUSTOMS. CONGEN OFFICER REFUSED REQUEST AND TOLD LOCAL EMPLOYEE TO LEAVE SAFES UNOPENED AT CUSTOMS. LATER IN DAY CONGEN LOCAL BROUGHT FREIGHT FROM PORT, INCLUDING THE TWO SAFES. ONE CASE CONTAINING SAFE MARKED NUMBER 1 HAD BEEN OPENED BY A PORT EMPLOYEE IN CUSTOMS. THE
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OTHER WAS STILL BANDED AND BORE POUCH SEALS AND A POUCH TAG

INDICATING SHIPMENT WAS POUCH NUMBER 73-22171-1F. CONGEN OFFICER TELEPHONED CUSTOMS AND TOLD INSPECTOR SAFES SHIPPED AS POUCH AND SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN OPENED. HE CLAIMED NO EVIDENCE ON FIRST CASE OR BRAVO/LIMA THAT SHIPMENT WAS DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE NOR WAS THERE DIPLOMATIC LETTER ACCOMPANYING SHIPMENT.

3. FOR DEPT: SOVIET ASSERTIONS MADE HERE OBVIOUSLY CONSEQUENCE OF EXPERIENCES OF SOVIET CONSULATE GENERAL IN SAN FRANCISCO DESCRIBED IN REFTEL. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS US INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS DROPPED, WE CAN EXPECT RECIPROCAL TREATMENT IN LENINGRAD. CONGEN WILL AWAIT DEPARTMENTS NOTIFICATION ON RESOLUTION OF MATTER AND WILL ADVISE OF ANY FURTHER DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED HERE.

4. FOR MOSCOW: FOR OUR BACKGROUND, PLEASE ADVISE EMBASSY EXPERIENCE REGARDING SUBMISSION OF PACKING LISTS AND CUSTOMS INSPECTION OF EMBASSY SHIPMENTS.

5. FOR FRANKFURT: PLEASE CONFIRM IF BOTH CASES SHIPPED AS DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENCE.

GLEYSTEN

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Message Attributes

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